

# LIMERICK SOCIALIST

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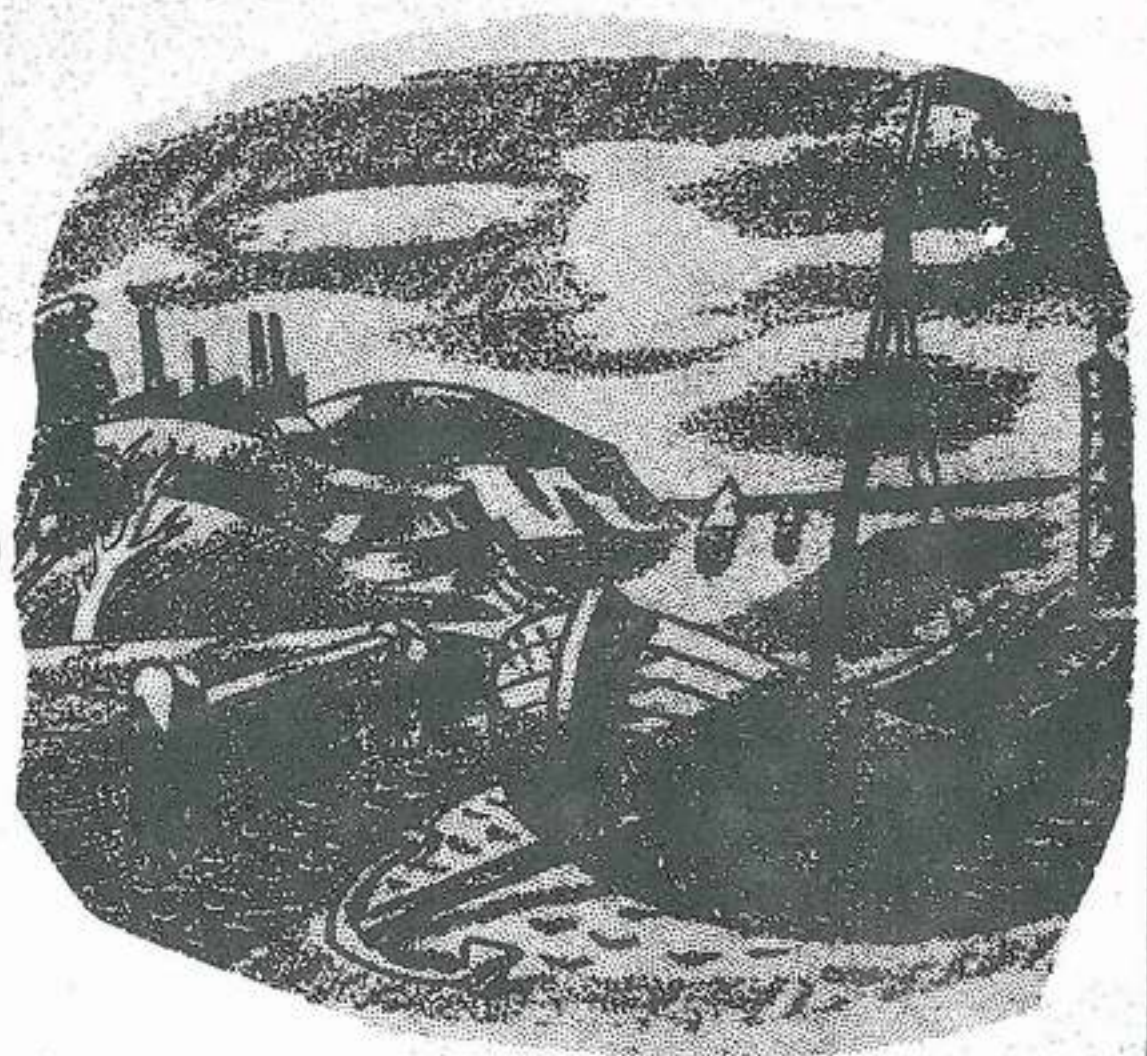
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'That which is good for the working class I esteem patriotic . . .' *James Connolly*

## THE FOURTH SIEGE OF LIMERICK



## FRANK O'CONNOR'S LIMERICK



LEINSTER, MUNSTER & CONNAUGHT

# ONWARD CHRISTIAN SOLDIERS

BY DERMOT MCBVOY

IT SEEMS that the latest batch of converts to the concept of social justice are the Catholic bishops and archbishops of Ireland. A friend reading their joint pastoral *The Work of Justice* said to me: "Some of it is almost word for word what you've been saying in the *Limerick Socialist* over the years". But, of course, it is; this paper has never been involved in anything save the spread of the just message. Take, for instance, my persistent campaign against overcharging by shopkeepers, profiteering, or drawing money for work not done, the pastoral says, "the proper name for those who practise them is still 'thief'". Precisely. How often have we said it!

Our converts also describe some money-lending and hire-purchase contracts as exploitation of the poor through extortionate interest rates. Nothing new in that. Regular readers of the *Socialist* will recall my frequent references to Christ whipping the usurers out of the Temple and suggesting that it was high time Dr. Newman and his clergy did the same. Metaphorically, of course.

And, after all the hou-ha about Proudhon's "all property is theft" and Dr. Newman's expressed reservations, what do we find in the pastoral but: "No one today can rationally claim 'my money is my own; I made it myself; I can do what I like with it'. Money was made today in great part by intelligent use of publicly-provided opportunities, grants and subsidies . . . it is morally unacceptable to hold that money has an absolute right to go wherever the highest return on investment can be secured". To money, add property!

Of course, Dr. Newman may well have dissented from this part of the pastoral and may decide that the expressed sentiments of the other bishops and archbishops have no applicability in the Diocese of Limerick. Will Mick Lipper, in that event, stay with Dr. Newman or join the "radicals" in the rest of the Catholic hierarchy? It is an interesting speculation.

If you need further confirmation (good word that!) of the way the Irish bishops have been lapping up the gospel according to the *Limerick Socialist* you have only to consider the pastoral's insistence that the Government has a duty to tax everybody equitably (are you with me Paddy Lane?) and that there is a moral obligation on all "to pay their just and lawful share of taxes" (Zinky Fingers, O'Donnell A Boo, and Mr. Europe himself, Herbert-Scherbert, please note). As for the tinkers, the bishops describe them as "the most discriminated against minority in this country . . . yet many have refused to have them as neighbours". I seem to remember writing about the petty snobs who threatened violence against poor, tattered wayfarers, and not hearing a Christian voice in support. Will the bishops' words succeed in changing the attitudes of the moneybags in our Grocers' Republic? I doubt it. We'll fight on — but will the bishops?

Another one of the bishops' recommendations calls for a deliberate discrimination in favour of the poor; a real transfer of money by the better off to the poorer groups. I have no doubt that the well-off sections of the community will resist such a transfer of wealth, that the working class will have to go to the barricades to squeeze out these rednecks, but will the bishops be still on our side at that stage?

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A BIG question-mark hangs over the bishops' apparent conversion to some measure of social justice — and Fianna Fail's imminent follow-up. The answer is simple: The Capitalist Game Is Up. There is no cure, under capitalism, for unemployment and inflation. These twin diseases are not confined to Ireland; they are ravaging the whole Western world. The Catholic Church sees the big blow-up coming and from its world-wide intelligence service the warning signals have gone out. Hence the sops to keep the workers quiet, to stay the wrath, to keep a semblance of order.

Consider Britain with whose people, republic or no republic, our future is inextricably tied: even with North Sea oil the forecast for next year alone is 2,250,000 unemployed coupled with higher living costs for the rest of the population. No wonder the prognosis is UNREST and that police-under a Labour Government! — are being trained as para-militaries. No gleam of hope that Britain, as in the Lemass — de Valera era, can absorb our "surplus" manpower.

Consider the U.S.A., the greatest capitalist country in the history of mankind. Unemployment, thanks to automation, is officially 12,500,000, unofficially with Negro and hispanic unregistered youths and girls and uncounted "wetbacks" from Mexico and Central American banana republics 20,000,000, so you'll appreciate why the almighty dollar is unsteady on the bourses of the world. Temporarily to cure some of the unemployment in the U.S. and in Europe would mean deflation and massive spending on public works, but where would that leave the dollar? Again the answer is simple. You'd have a 20-cent dollar and a scream from the Rockefellers, Vanderbilts and Mellons that not even Edward Munch could transfer to canvas. In face of this, small wonder that Jimmy Carter has reneged on his promise to "Sunny Jim" Callaghan of even a five per cent deflation. But as I said, The Capitalist Game Is Up.

You've all read or heard on the radio about the riots in New York when the giant ConEd failed to supply electricity to the city of New York and the subsequent orgy of looting and rape. No publicity though for the later riot by 10,000 black and Puerto Rican youths who ripped off a heavy metal gate from a public building in Brooklyn. Even the police were puzzled, for the building held no money, no furs, no diamonds, no colour TVs. The rioters' target was a job application form, a form which might, just might, get the holder one of the 2,000 temporary jobs which the city authorities created to clear up the debris of the great black-out riot!

Perhaps now you have an idea what the Irish bishops and Mr. Get-the-country-moving-again have in mind when they're pondering just a little social justice, a small dose of Christianity? I'd say they had better have some better answer — and soon — for the growing army of unemployed school-leavers. 'Brits Out' is not what I have in mind. What is the answer? A good question. For a start: a siege economy, a 100 per cent Income Tax on every penny over a fixed wage, confiscation of all the means of production and that implies the land for the people, the roads for the bullocks. Bishops and lesser mortals would then be able to see who the real patriots are. And the real Christians.

Of course, many people will shrug off such drastic action as unlikely to win public acceptance. I'm more optimistic. Perhaps I have greater faith in my fellowman? To digress, I remember in my Fleet Street days a flower-seller at Chancery Lane Tube station who complained to me about the decline in sales to City men hurrying home from their ledgers. I got him a board and on chalk I wrote: "You may not like my flowers now, but they'll grow on you in the end". It stopped the City men in their tracks and business boomed. In the end the fainthearts will get the message that socialism, like honesty, is not just the best policy; it is the only policy. In the end, all we'll own is a property six feet by three and we'll be sharing that with worms or, in my case, *Milax budapestensis*, which I killed off in astonishing numbers this potato season; he'll have his revenge. In the end, the common end.

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IT WAS my melancholy duty recently to attend the funeral in

# AROUND THE BEND

## REPORTS FROM HERE, THERE & NOWHERE

Sinn Fein (the Workers' Party) last night announced a grand scheme to provide a million jobs. Speaking at the opening of a republican shrine in Knock, Co. Mayo, Mr. Eamonn Smullen, the official spokesman on Industrial Affairs made the following statement:

"It is with pleasure that I announce, on this illustrious day, to you, the most advanced and intelligent section (applause) of the Mayo proletariat, our mind-bending project for the creation of one million jobs. We (S.F. the W.P.) plan to build a distillery in Dublin Bay; this will be the largest and the most technically advanced distillery in the world, drawing on our 32-County organisation, the only party organised North and South of the Border, and on cadres expert in the art of distillation, loyal distillers from the glens of Antrim to the rocky fastnesses of Connemara, we have planned, costed and examined from every aspect this great project.

"The distillery will be erected on an artificially created reinforced-concrete island six miles off the northern spur of the Bull Island. The capital outlay for construction of the plant will be £50 million and we have been promised financial aid and expert advice by Russia, China, Cambodia, Albania, Vietnam and a number of other friendly states who for security reasons wish to remain anonymous.

"Initially it will employ 20,000 workers producing 60 million gallons of poteen per year. The work-force will be augmented in the following fashion. The distillery on completion will immediately come under state control and illicit distillation will be outlawed, illicit distillers will, if apprehended, be sent to work the boilers in the Bull Distillery. As a nationalised plant the common people will be entitled to 5 gallons of poteen per day and to ensure that each worker receives his quota a nationalised fleet of motor launches will be created to transport the proletariat to and from the plant. These boats will be built by a specially trained elite corps of boat-builders drawn from the people.

"As there will be an estimated 500 projected fatalities through drowning and asphyxiation each day, a nationalised state-controlled undertaking and burial department will be created employing a projected 40,000 coffin-makers, 80,000 gravediggers, 20,000 hearse-drivers, 35,000 poll-bearers, and 26,000 state-lamenters to handle the fatality spin-off. Trotskyists, all socialists not members of S.F.W.P., will be entitled to 10 compulsory bottles a day and it is hoped in this way to regularise and standardise political opinion to reflect the official doctrine of the Official Movement which in the usual

way will be changed each week.

"The downstream spin-off will be developed in three different areas:

**Fishing.** As there will be a regular and regulated input of waste alcohol into the Bay the fishing grounds will be substantially enriched by alcoholic fish from the Irish Sea, North Sea, Channel Islands and the Bay of Biscay. The state fishing fleet is to be expanded and the export of sozzled cockles and mussels and cirrhotic herring and mackerel will be substantially advanced.

**Tourism:**

The Bay will officially be designated Alcoholic Paradise and Anglo-American and West European bourgeois elements will be encouraged to take to the water. Tourists will be allowed a daily bellyful of the Bay water and using hardsell methods it is hoped that Dublin Bay will become a Mecca for alcoholics.

State farms to be known as the Boru Collectives to be established in Clontarf and the Clontarf kulaks moved to Connemara for republican indoctrination classes. Boru Collectives to be run by reformed Provos who will feed the pigs and cattle on waste products of the distillation process.

"On a broad political basis the project will have definite and positive political results. Poteen distributed and drunk on a selective basis will produce a somnolent and happy people grateful to the revolutionary policies of Sinn Fein - The Workers Party". (Thunderous applause).

Cries of: "Forward to the distillery!"

## THE EMPLOYEE BY RUDI HOLZAPFEL

Is all that fire put out, that passion spent  
On buggar all, that I now worry what the boss  
May think, and how to pay the bloody rent?  
So I'm the rebel digit on his loss  
Account . . . well, damn him and his cookie shop!  
Can't I dream, and love, or try and treat all  
Passers-by as human beings and drop  
A bob from off some battered article?  
I tell you, Mate, to please one poor old face,  
To make it laugh again, or even smile,  
I'd T.N.T. their bastard commonplace  
And have them running up and down the aisle.  
It is not time, but give my ghost re-birth -  
I'll burn away such sickness from the Earth!

Ennis of Flann Lyons, son of Mrs. Delia Lyons, who keeps a pleasant family pub at the O'Connell Square end of Parnell Street. It was a big turnout and deservedly so. Flann, as a young man, spent eight years on his back in a frame-bed, but he did not whine at his ill-fortune; he learned chess; he read extensively. He treated unmoneyed men, myself included, when Fortune looked the other way as she does from time to time. I shall always be indebted to him for introducing me to Duff Cooper's "Talleyrand", a slight volume compared to Prof. J.B. Wilson's biography that took thirty-eight years to research and write, but much more memorable especially for the death-scene. Flann and I would smile wryly over it. Once when drinking after hours in an Ennis hotel - it was in the war years and I was on leave - the question of impending clothes - rationing in Ireland was under discussion. The late Matt Kennedy, one of the merchant princes of the town, said offhandedly, "If it comes, it won't affect me; I've suits to do me for years", and Flann interposed, "Don't be too sure. Aren't you wearin' them night and day!" Touche. Flann knew

how to puncture the pretentious; our relationship was warm - and wary. I'll miss him.

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I NOTE with some distaste that the former President, Cearbhall O Dalaigh, who lives in Kerry, has applied for (and been granted) a State car to take himself and Mrs. O Dalaigh round Dublin when they visit. I estimate that with all his pensions this touchy fellow has about £20,000 a year, that his other income - he never bought £300 crocodile handbags for actresses or other men's wives - must run to thousands more. In his position I'd run to taxi when I'd come to Dublin. To ask for - and get - a State car is certainly a thundering disgrace.

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TO MAKE up for an unfortunate misprint in those Rules OK items last month, how's this from the Foreign Office in Whitehall: French Diplomacy Rules Au Quai.

# FRANK O'CONNOR'S LIMERICK

It was announced last month that this year's North Cork Writers' Festival, to be held in Doneraile in October, will study the literary works of the two Cork writers, Frank O'Connor and Sean O'Faolain. Two Limerick writers, the poet Michael Hartnett and Limerick Leader columnist Mannix Joyce, are listed among the guest contributors to the festival. Details of the themes of the talks to be given by Hartnett and Joyce have not been given but an examination of the writings of O'Connor and O'Faolain on Limerick and its people would be certain to make an interesting and lively study.

O'Connor, especially, had something of a "thing" about Limerick. He was a frequent visitor to the city and county, had many Limerick friends, and wrote widely about the place and its people. His interest — it could even be termed fascination — appears to have started during his Civil War days when he saw some action-serious and comic — in County Limerick and North Cork. O'Connor took the republican side and later recounted his experiences at this time his two out-of-print books, *Leinster, Munster and Connaught and An Only Child*.

The young, romantic republican found himself in Ashill Towers near Kilmallock, a mock-Gothic castle that had been taken over by his fighting colleagues. At Buttevant he had his first encounter with a group of republican Limerickmen and it was a dramatic one. He describes the scene in *An Only Child*.

*There was a column of men lined up there — the angriest-looking men I'd ever seen — and their officer asked me where General Deasy was. I didn't know, I said; I was just looking for him myself. "Well, when you find him tell him we're the Limerick column", the officer said. "We're after fighting our way down from Patrickswell, and when we got here the Corkmen had meat for their breakfast and we had none. Tell him that if the Limerickmen don't get meat there'll be mutiny".*

O'Connor was not the greatest of soldiers and soon returned to Cork city where he was later arrested and brought to prison in Dublin. In jail he met another group of republican Limerickmen and they made a lasting impression on him, as he relates in *Munster, Leinster and Connaught*. He starts off with a typical O'Connor opening gambit:

*I don't know why I should always have had a soft spot in my heart for Limerick. Of course, my family came originally from that county, but that was in the eleventh century, and I am no believer in racial memories. Probably it began in an internment camp during the Civil War, for here I hit it off admirably with a whole pitiful of Limerickmen. They were a tough argumentative, clannish lot with very good voices, who amused themselves in the evenings with part-singing, a recreation they were alone in enjoying. It was well I had friends among them, because our mess-leader was a Limerickman, and I might otherwise have starved, but no Limerickman dared exploit even a Limerickman's pal. When a*

*hunger-strike was declared and I opposed it and became violently unpopular in the camp, they made me sleep in their hut for safety. It must have been something of a strain on them to see me return three times a day from the dining hall, and they always asked fondly after the menu, but they would not let a pal be knocked about by any Dublin jackeen. Since then I have always felt at home in the city.*

Having "set-up" the city and its people in this seemingly innocent and charitable piece, O'Connor goes on to do a thorough hatchet-job in the rest of his chapter on Limerick. The mischievous and irreverent incoherence, often found in his non-fiction writings, couldn't be bottled for long and bursts into full spate in the very next paragraph:

*I have no doubt whatever that if you had been brought up in it (Limerick) it would seem a hell-hole worse even than Cork. At any rate, my Limerick cousins assure me that the great pleasure of living there is that you know everybody's business, which is my definition of hell; but knowing nobody's business except your friends', and not caring a rap whether or not anyone knows yours, you can be as happy here as in any Irish town . . . I once met a disgusted Galwayman who had been shifted from a comfortable billet in Cork to Limerick, which he detested. He said it was a haunt of hypocrisy, a thing almost unknown in Cork! He said everyone you drank with in Cork frankly admitted that he didn't believe in God but that in the other accursed hole every soul he met put on a pretence of orthodoxy. Maybe my cousins were right, and what's wrong with Limerick is that everybody's business is known.*

O'Connor next turns his attention to religion in Limerick, to the religious orders and to the history of its people in dealing with religions other than Catholic. Though it is difficult enough to establish his own religious position from his writings, it is clear that O'Connor was totally opposed to any form of religious intolerance or bigotry. In fact, one of his best friends in Limerick was the Protestant, Standish Stewart, with whom he cycled to many abbeys, castles and ruins in counties Limerick and Clare taking photographs and notes. Many of Stewart's photographs appear in *Leinster, Munster and Connaught and Irish Miles*, and the latter book is dedicated to the Limerickman. In the former book O'Connor continues his tale:

*But there is a certain fanaticism about the town which is most repellant . . . All the religious orders in Ireland have established themselves there, even the Jesuits, who are popular nowhere else, and my poor unfortunate Galway friend cannot find a soul who will admit to any doubt of orthodox religion. The religious orders run confraternities which march to church behind their bands, and exclusion from one of these confraternities is almost equivalent to social extinction. Just try, as I once innocently did, inviting a Protestant clergyman to sit at the same table with Catholics, and you will realise how deep the stream of fanaticism runs. Limerick has the honour of being the only town in Ireland which has ever staged anti-Semitic demonstrations. Jews, evangelists and strolling players have all at various times suffered from these outbursts of demented religion.*

The Parnellite split ran deep in Limerick as it did elsewhere in the country. O'Connor next gives a comical description of a bitter row between two old friends when they started to discuss the affair:

*One Limerick friend — an extreme republican, I need*

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# WAR CRIES

PERHAPS the most powerful hold which any politician can hope to exert on a society is the power to make peace or war; to be in the position that if his plans are thwarted he can let loose the dogs of war. Napoleon was one such politician, Hitler was another. Gerry Fitt is decidedly not.

Yet only last week the leader of the SDLP was announcing on RTE radio that if the British government did not have a care, he, Gerry Fitt, would reluctantly have to pass the baton of leadership over to the "men of violence". The result would, of course, be an intensification of the war; which fact Gerry Fitt dutifully regretted but said he would have to place the blame for it squarely on the shoulders of the British government.

The whole statement is enough to make a dyspeptic cat double up with laughter. The SDLP have strenuously cultivated the idea over the years that they stand between the Catholic community and the Provos. That it is only their self-sacrificing stand over the years which has prevented the Provos from assuming the leadership of the Catholic community. The reality, of course, is that everything the SDLP has achieved has been done on the coat tails of the Provos. Since the Provos are now on the decline, the SDLP are sliding even more precipitously towards oblivion. Hence the hysterical war-cries of Gerry Fitt and the threats to step up the war if the British government does not cease acting sensibly.

If only the Provos would take Gerry Fitt at his word and announce that in view of his statement, they were now handing over responsibility for the armed struggle to the SDLP, the armchair bombasts of their pathetic travesty of a party would be really shown up for what they are.

Things are moving too quickly now for the SDLP. The drift towards integration continues and nothing in the immediate future seems likely to stop it. The SDLP's hope of sitting in power at Stormont has gone and they have to adjust to the colder air of Westminster politics or go. They are having great trouble adjusting and when the Speaker's Conference begins determining the extra number of Northern Ireland seats at Westminster, the impossibility of their stance will become even more obvious. The days when the SDLP had only to declaim something for it to have the force of divine truth have gone. They will now have to fight their corner and if Gerry Fitt's outburst is anything to go by, a fairly miserable effort it will be.

There are even now faint stirrings in Catholic community which betoken better days to come. There are signs that a party which accepts the union as given, which concentrates on the bread and butter questions and which looks for their solution to the wider arena of Westminster politics could gain substantial support from many Catholics.

The present posturings of the SDLP and their laughable attempt to play Bismarck can only hasten that development. If the last eight years or so have done anything, they have enabled many people to separate shadow and substance. To bluster about making war, as Gerry Fitt did, without having the guts, energy or wherewithal to do it only exposes the SDLP to further contempt and ridicule from a people who have known only too well what the real warriors sound and look like.

*(Reprinted from Workers Weekly).*

*scarcely say — describes, how he grew up during the hysteria of the Parnell divorce case and the split it caused in the ranks of Limerick nationalists. His father, a real old Limerick gentleman, took the unpopular Parnellite side. One of his father's oldest friends, whom we may call Mr. Murphy, took the side of the Church. One evening, while my friend Paddy was at his lessons, Mr. Murphy arrived and was welcomed, and then the talk shifted to the divorce case.*

*"Why should any man sacrifice his country for an English prostitute? Mr. Murphy asked heatedly.*

*"Joe", said my friend's father gravely, "you and I are old friends, and I hope to remain so. But I must ask you not to let me hear you speak again of a lady in those disgusting terms — at least, not in my house".*

*Ten minutes passed; the argument became still more heated, and Mr. Murphy burst out: "I'm no tool of the priests but I say the woman is a prostitute".*

*Paddy's father rose.*

*"Paddy", he said quietly. "Get Mr. Murphy's hat and coat".*

*"You'll see I'm right", said Mr. Murphy.*

*"The weather has been keeping very fine, Joe", said Paddy's father while the boy brought the visitor's hat and coat. Father helped the guest on with his coat and showed him out, talking freely all the time. He opened the door and then, with a lightning move, stepped out after Mr. Murphy and drew the door shut behind him. A moment later it opened, and Paddy saw Mr. Murphy lying flat on the pavement, while his father looked back scowling.*

*"You foul-mouthed cur!" he said, Oh, a real old Limerick gentleman!*

O'Connor reserves some of his most trenchant criticism for Bishop Edward Thomas O'Dwyer. The authoritarian bishop, who often engaged in controversies in the *Limerick Leader* and *London Times* at the same time, turned his fire on the old Fenian Mayor John Daly. O'Connor casts a sardonic eye on

the dispute.

*In most Irish cities nationalism has always come first, religion second; but in Limerick where the two fanaticisms are almost equally balanced, they produce conflict on a very considerable scale. Readers of Joyce will remember the fanatical nationalist Davin in "The Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man". This was a Limerickman, George Clancy, who was later murdered by the Black and Tans. Another famous local nationalist was a baker. The Bishop at the time was a toady called Dwyer, who had been appointed by Rome and was determined on crushing nationalist opposition (later he changed his tune and became something of a national hero). When the baker stood for election to the Corporation, Dwyer turned the whole power of the Church against him. In spite of this, he was elected. His first business as Mayor was to attend High Mass at the cathedral with the Corporation. A special chair was reserved for him, and he appeared there in his mayoral robes. Dwyer was sitting in the Bishop's throne. When the Mayor appeared he sent a message ordering him out of the cathedral. The Mayor rose and left, but the Corporation has gone as far as it could go and it skulked behind.*

Their account of this scene evokes shades of a more recent controversy involving another bishop's successful intervention into local politics. The chapter ends with a characteristic O'Connor flourish but he also manages to confuse Croker of Ballinagarde (the "I doubt it says Croker" man) with the infamous Boss Croker:

*At the other side of the (Ballyneety) road is the ruined home of Boss Croker, with statues "all standing naked in the open air". There was a proposal to bring Hercules to Limerick, but a committee of inspection, having studied him carefully fore and aft, decided that he would never do for the confraternities. Where Jews, salvationists and actors had not escaped, what chance had poor old Hercules?*

*(To be continued).*

# JOHN CASEY'S WEDDING COLUMN

Saturday will be the happy day for Allison Grattan-Lindsay, of Langrishe Place, Summerhill, and James Lemass-Haughey of Booterstown Park, Booterstown. Allison is chief model in Pantiland, the Anglo-American-Japanese concern, makers of the most sheer and exclusive lingerie in the British Isles. Allison's mother, the former Elizabeth Grattan-Esmonde was, the chief hostess at Grafton Streets most exclusive house of pleasure, the Long Lay, and before taking up her post here had worked in New Orleans's internationally acclaimed House of the Rising Sun and in the *Maison de Merde*, meeting place for the Parisian intellectuals, writers and painters in the *Place Pigalle*. Allison's father, the late W.T. Fitzgerald-Lindsay, was a famous and distinguished man of the town, honorary chairman of the Animal Club and founder member of the Christian Front. In the field of sport he was well known as a rugby buff and as a scrum-half his dash, speed and lightning reflexes earned him the name of Willie the Boot.

Indeed, friendship between the two families was founded on the boot. Jimmy Haughey's daddy, Sean Lynch-Haughey, managing director of Ireland's oldest boot manufacturing firm, Silvertip of Booterstown, met Allison's late, lamented daddy when Mr. Fitzgerald-Lindsay was negotiating for a large consignment of boots for General O'Duffy's blue army, on their way to a holy campaign in Spain, and for the exclusive set for his own Animal Club. Friendship ripened over the years until the beautiful, flaxen-haired Allison and the dashing, dark-eyed James literally fell into each others arms in Booterstown Park.

This is how Allison, sporting a unique knuckle duster – nineteen diamonds in a spiral cluster with an emerald inset – told the romantic story to me, exclusively: "The Booterstown Boot Boys and the Dun Laoghaire – Rathdown Punk Rockers organised a fantastic exhibition for Booterstown Park on the August Monday bank holiday, beginning at six in the afternoon. The festival was sponsored by the Department of Education and opened by the Minister for Culture and Education, Mr. John Wilson. Unfortunately because of a prior engagement in The Pleasure Place where I was working weekends, (Allison, like her mother, loves her work: 'Work is pleasure', she says) I was late for the opening of the festival arriving just in time for the finals of the free-booting competition. When I saw James gracefully laying about him with his shiny brown boots my heart went out to him and I knew I would never be happy until I had him nailed, roped and ringed. He almost literally fell into my arms. He slipped and, as he landed, his boots got caught in the folds of my maxi-dress. He simply tumbled into my lap, and he has never looked back since".

The happy couple are getting married in the Church of the Crucifixion in Dublin's most exclusive suburban red light district, Blood Lane. Lucky James and Allison are then off on an African honeymoon with stopovers in Liberia, Sierra Leone and Zaire, before travelling to Kinshape where James takes up a prestigious and highly lucrative post with Uganda's Ministry for internal security. There the handsome, broad-shouldered six-footer will act as adviser in the Department of the Final Solution.

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## LETTER TO THE EDITOR

The election to the Senate of the national university took place recently. Together with the ballot paper was a declaration of identity form which had to be signed by a graduate, or a member of the legal or medical profession, or a member of the diplomatic service, or an authorised administrator of oaths, or a minister of religion.

It was just further proof of the snobbery and elitism which are the pillars of the universities in this country. For graduates in Belmullet and Dingle the finding a member of the diplomatic corps would in all probability be rather difficult. Stipulating that it be signed by a fellow graduate or a peace commissioner seems fairly reasonable. No, I must confess it was the legal and medical profession that rose the hackles, for if one were to search for two groups of lawfully credited social bandits it would be hard to find better or more successful robbers than the doctors and the lawyers. And not only do they leech, rob and overcharge but there are within both professions members who are highly inefficient and totally incapable of doing the work for which they are supposedly trained.

An organisation which was set up to investigate the activities of solicitors was flooded with complaints of gross

overcharging, work undone and money pocketed. As for the medical profession some of them bury more than they cure, are totally ignorant of developments in contemporary medicine, never attend refresher courses, are distinguished in that their insolence matches their ignorance and have sensibly substituted the Mammonic code for the Hippocratic oath.

Needless to say, they are the products of universities where education is at a premium and where academic hacks through their good example inculcate snobbery and pomposity. My form was signed by the man next door a baker, who under "Qualification" wrote "baker".

Pat O'Donovan.

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# TOMAS O'FIAICH

The wails of the Irish liberals at the promotion of Monsignor O Fiaich to the Archbishopric, of Armagh are amusing. A carbon copy of a Fianna Fail deputy, bumptious, smug, arrogant, these are some of the comments. John Hume, a wily politician, has more sense: he says the archbishop's nationalistic views are those of the people of Armagh. And so they are and not only Armagh but the 26-Counties.

Are not the majority of our citizens nationalists? Are not our people republicans? Is not Fianna Fail our majority party the republican party? It hardly matters that most Fianna Fail would find it difficult to explain their republicanism. But they believe in a 32-County Ireland. Monsignor O Fiaich also supports the unification of the country: privately he has been heard say that every man worth his salt in Crossmaglen was in the Provos. And do not our three big parties support unification, at least Tom Fee is logical: he knows that the

country could only be united in a civil war — by united he means a 32-County Catholic state.

Anyone who believes that the Protestants of Ballymena, Ballymoney, Bannbridge or countless towns, villages and hamlets in the North would willingly agree to federation, unification, rule from Athlone or rule from Dublin should have tests run on the condition of their brain cells. The Northern Protestants would fight to the death to resist Southern Rome rule.

But, why the hassle about Father O Fiaich? For once the Church has made a democratic choice: he is a Roman Catholic republican nationalist representative of his county, diocese and country. The problem with the Ballsbridge liberals is that they can't think straight: you can't have your Church and not have it.

## CIVIL RIGHTS

The Irish Civil Rights Association, the organisation which strives to see that the I.R.A. are granted the civil rights which they deny their opponents, are carrying out some strange capers these days. A dozen or so members of this body decided to stage a sit down in Grafton Street, Dublin, some weeks ago to draw attention to the "imperialist and fascist activities of the British in Northern Ireland". They duly blocked the street and an evangelical spokesman tried to halt disinterested bypassers and annoyed policemen with the Zane Grey history of Ireland where the perfidious British has hounded the pure and gentle Gaels for the seven hundred odd years. And drawing on his vast knowledge of European history the speaker was able to compare the bombers in Long Kesh with the French peasants living under the shadow of Marie Antoinette's cake.

Walking briskly down the street and across the bridge rushing home to my bedsetter ears ringing with the profundities of the Grafton Street historian I was more than surprised on arriving at the G.P.O. to find the same ubiquitous band now blocking O'Connell Street. Another historian here too.

Like their mother organisation, Sinn Fein (Kevin Street) the I.C.R.A. have run out of steam, supporters, ideas and common sense, and like the man who was told he was to die on an appointed day, they believe that if they keep running death will not catch up with them. Provisionalism and the violent, sectarian, bigoted nationalism for which it stands are, after eight years of murder, brutality and senseless violence, dying slowly and surely.

## BALLHOP

### THE BISHOP MOVES

The failure of the Limerick City Council, at its recent meeting, to agree on two candidates to fill the vacancies left following the resignations of Deputy D. O'Malley and Michael Crowe could have resulted in a serious political stalemate but for the timely intervention of the Catholic Bishop of Limerick, Dr. Jeremiah Newman. It has been reliably learned that the bishop has taken public responsibility in the making of the necessary arrangements to co-opt the two new members. "After my success in nominating Mick Lipper in the General Election, there is no earthly reason why I cannot go one better this time by personally picking the two new Councillors" he stated.

Dr. Newman disclosed that his choices were one of his diocesan priests living in the Ennis Road area and a nun from a Corbally convent. The bishop explained his reasons for taking this action:

"Politicians cannot always be trusted to do the right thing on their own and need a little spiritual help from time to time", he said. "And Mick Lipper, especially, badly needs a close Spiritual Adviser to assist him in making up his mind on a variety of complex issues, and who better to advise him than a clerical Councillor?"

The bishop went on to say that he had answered the demand from some women's groups for a woman member of the Council by his appointment of a nun. "In this way I am killing two birds with one stone and also showing my appreciation for the wonderful work done by the faithful little nuns who worked so hard to make Lipper a T.D.", he concluded.

The Duke, on a summertime sojourn,  
At his stately old Abbey at Woburn,  
Said: "These tourists are fine,  
You may give them some wine,  
But do keep them away from my Cockburn!"

## IN PRAISE OF COCKBURNS PORT

A world-famous gourmet we know,  
Whose grasp of our grammar was low,  
Said: 'I'm pleased to report,  
That the very best port,  
Was that bottled by Cock, Burns & Co!'

There's a story being told in Kilmaley  
Of an eighty-year-old who, quite gaily,  
Having fathered a son,  
On being asked how 'twas done,  
Answered 'Cockburn's Port nightly and daily!'

**PART  
30**

**BY  
P.J. RYAN**

# The Fourth Siege of Limerick

## THE RAINBOW'S END

In January 1923 the first detachment of an unarmed police force the Civic Guards arrived in the city. The courthouse was opened by the appointment of a District Justice who, with the assistance of the Civic Guards, administered civil law. About one hundred Civil War prisoners in the county gaol were transferred to the Curragh internment camp by rail. The railways were again in working order with trains running to a timetable. Most of the road bridges west and south of the city and in the county had temporary repairs made to them and were usable for some time. The four symbols of Law and Order, the police barracks, the courthouse, the gaol and the customs house were functioning peacefully.

In March 1923, after ten months of destruction, death and terror, all resistance to the State ceased abruptly. Most of the leaders of the Diehards had been captured in The Last Round-Up and had ordered their followers to cease all further resistance to the State.

After the ten months orgy of destruction death and terror the country was destitute. The goodwill of the European nations and the United States was lost. Much of the foreign trade of the country was also lost. Unemployment was widespread. The destruction of property amounted to so many hundreds of millions of pounds that the financial credit of the country was destroyed and a foreign loan of a few millions of pounds could not be obtained from any source. There was peace and law and order in the country. The Sinn Fein policy of Arthur Griffith and Michael Collins had prevailed. The Treaty was accepted as a stepping stone to freedom.

For eight centuries of turmoil blood and tears the Irish had followed a rainbow which "shining through sorrow's tears" had led them on, now they had reached the rainbow's end. Here then should lie a crock of gold. From now on all rains, snows and storms should cease. A golden sunburst should shine all day and a harvest moon all night. The gates were open to the Land of Youth and the dreams that lie beyond. Tir na Og was theirs to hold for now and evermore.

## THE LAND OF DROSS

The crock of gold was there but the fairy gold was dross. After eight centuries of occupation the British Army were gone. The Tans the Auxiliaries and the R.I.C. were gone. Arthur Griffith, founder of Sinn Fein, was dead and gone. Michael Collins, founder of the Irish Republican Army and leader of the nation, was dead and gone.

As the country now was so it must remain, for the epitaph of those who died, written by Moore, reads:

*'Till like the rainbow's light  
thy various tints unite  
and form in Heaven's sight one arch of peace'.*

(Concluded).

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## Letter to the Editor

September 1977



I thought your article about me was extremely fair.

Yours sincerely,

*David Thornley*  
David Thornley